

AMENDMENT

In the claims:

Please amend claim 5 such that the amended claim reads as follows:

5. (Twice Amended) An isolated nucleic acid expression vector comprising a nucleotide sequence that:
- (a) encodes the amino acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 2; and
(b) hybridizes to the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:1 or the complement thereof under highly stringent conditions of 0.5 M NaHPO₄, 7% sodium dodecyl sulfate (SDS) and 1 mM EDTA at 65°C and washing in 0.1x SSC/0.1%SDS at 68°C.

RESPONSE

I. Status of the Claims

No claims have been cancelled. Claim 5 has been amended. No new claims have been added.

Claims 5-7 are therefore presently pending in the case. For the convenience of the Examiner, a clean copy of the pending claims is attached hereto as **Exhibit A**. In compliance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.121(c)(1)(ii), a marked up copy of the original claims is attached hereto as **Exhibit B**.

II. Support for the Amended Claim

Claim 5 has been amended to recite specific highly stringent hybridization conditions. Support for this claim can be found throughout the specification as originally filed, with particular support being found at least at page 5, lines 4-11.

It will be understood that no new matter is included within the amended claim.